Canada Biker Stamps Hit the Road June 5

On June 5 Canada Post released the first two Permanent [non-denominated] First Class domestic rate stamps in a set dedicated to Canadian motorcycle manufacturing and design. The two stamps travel back to the turn of the century, when out of the desire to merge the flexibility of bicycles with the speed of cars the first motorcycles were created.

The stamps showcase two early models, the CCM 1908 Lightweight Motor Cycle and the 1914 Indian. They are the first in a series dedicated to Canadian motorcycle manufacturing and design. Canada Post tells us, "The Canadian landscape is built for motorcycles, and Canadians have built motorcycles for the landscape—we are a country of riders."

Jim Phillips, director of Stamp Services at Canada Post, stated, "When motorcycles first captured the imagination of adventurers, Canada's entrepreneurs, designers and manufacturers were there. These stamps pay tribute to the excitement of those early days."

In the early 1900s, while developing its bicycle and hockey skate businesses (which now operate as distinct entities), the Canada Cycle and Motor Company became the first company to step into the emerging motorcycle market in Canada. The company created only a few models, and the 1908 (left stamp) was among its first. CCM used a Swiss-designed engine that could be attached to any conventional bike frame.

Famed for its ability to engineer speed on two wheels, Indian Motorcycle Company—then called Hendee Manufacturing Co.—was an early commercially successful motorcycle maker.

Based in Springfield, Mass., it opened a plant on Toronto's Mercer Street in 1912.

The Indian (right stamp) became the bike of choice for Canadian racer "Wild Joe" Baribeau, who rode it to provincial and national racing championships. The bike's racing success triggered a boom in demand from North American police departments, as well as military units.

Stamp designer Matt Warburton chose a simple design that was intended to focus on the structural beauty of a motorcycle. The stamps each showcase two views of their motorcycle: the top view from the perspective of the rider and a profile.

The stamps are available in booklets of 10. They are in a square format with simulated perforations.

Also available is a souvenir sheet with the two stamps having 13+ perforations. They were printed by Canadian Bank Note Company using lithography in five colors.

Additional information on the new issues of Canada may be found at:

http://www.stampnewsnow.com/canadaPostnewissues.html.